

CYCLIZED AMINO ACID DERIVATIVES

## CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuing application of co-  
5 pending International Patent Application PCT/US00/18577,  
filed July 6, 2000, which claims priority of United  
States provisional patent 60/142,404, filed July 6, 1999.

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 The present invention relates to cyclized amino  
acid derivatives for treating or preventing neuronal  
damage associated with neurological diseases. The  
invention also provides compositions comprising the  
compounds of the present invention and methods of  
utilizing those compositions for treating or preventing  
15 neuronal damage.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Neurological diseases are associated with the  
death of or injury to neuronal cells. Typical treatment  
of neurological diseases involves drugs capable of  
20 inhibiting neuronal cell death. A more recent approach  
involves the promotion of nerve regeneration by promoting  
neuronal growth.

Neuronal growth, which is critical for the  
survival of neurons, is stimulated *in vitro* by nerve  
25 growth factors (NGF). For example, Glial Cell Line-  
Derived Neurotrophic Factor (GDNF) demonstrates  
neurotrophic activity both, *in vivo* and *in vitro*, and is  
currently being investigated for the treatment of  
Parkinson's disease. Insulin and insulin-like growth  
30 factors have been shown to stimulate growth of neurites  
in rat pheochromocytoma PC12 cells and in cultured  
sympathetic and sensory neurons [Recio-Pinto et al., J.  
Neurosci., 6, pp. 1211-1219 (1986)]. Insulin and